

Letters  
Los Angeles Times

Of the two 'green buildings' featured in a side-by-side comparison in the Times (*Two L.A. Buildings Are Clean, Green Recycling Machines*, Jan. 26), the Audubon Discovery Center in Debs Park north of downtown clearly is the greener, not the Natural Resources Defense Council's Robert Redford Building in Santa Monica.

The Audubon Nature Center is not just a rehabilitated green building, but also a 'discovery center' to learn about and experience how humans and nature can live symbiotically, how we can share the Earth with the biospheric processes that make the human enterprise possible. It is about the relationship we have with -- and the responsibility we have to -- the birds, butterflies, bees and other creatures with which we share our neighborhoods (and planet).

The Audubon Center is not just another energy-efficient building, but an example of a totally solar-powered public facility not connected to the central power grid. It is, in effect, a showcase "solar televillage" that could be built in Iraq, Afghanistan or rural Africa to provide people with electricity, clean water, wireless communications, and the means to conduct electronic commerce, distance learning, and telemedicine. The new building in Debs Park shows the U.S. and the world how we can bring prosperity and peace -- and dignity and empowerment -- to places like Afghanistan and Iraq by helping them construct a true 21st-century energy system that provides reliable energy and energy independence to afflicted, poverty- and strife-afflicted regions. Forget building a central power grid in Iraq, Mr. Bush, and bring the Iraqis solar-photovoltaic and solar-thermal power and help them to control their own energy and economic destiny.

The Audubon Center, moreover, is not just a well-designed building, but an example of a "homeland security" preparedness facility where solar electricity (the same photovoltaic technology originally developed by NASA that is powering the pair of Rovers just landed on Mars) combined with battery backup will provide the communication system to operate during a major seismic or terror disaster that brings down the electric grid.

Especially notable is the demonstration at the Audubon Center of a revolutionary new solar-thermal air conditioning system that requires 1/10<sup>th</sup> the power (installed by my company, Los Angeles-based Sun Utility Network and Bergquam Energy Systems), which harvests solar energy with 408 solar vacuum tubes and provides non-electric interior cooling and heating -- a technology that will be the key to reducing the now growing peak-load demand for electricity on hot summer

days that causes electric brownouts and necessitates the construction of new central power plants, and the increased pollution from these plants.

The Audubon Center is not just a nice green building; it is a picture of our preferred future. It's about powering a sustainable Global Village on a protected Earth that remains a fine place to live long into the future.

Les Hamasaki  
President, SUN Utility Network, Inc.  
4952 Coringa Drive  
Los Angeles, CA 90042

*Cell: 323.350.5750*